



**INDONESIA:  
ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND HEALTH  
HIGHLIGHTS  
MARCH 2008**

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## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **UN ISSUES FIRST GREEN CERTIFICATE FOR INDONESIA**

The UN issued the first saleable "certificates of emissions reduction" (CERs) on March 14 to Indonesia's publicly listed cement maker, PT Indocement Tungal Prakarsa Tbk, for its alternative fuel projects. PT Indocement registered two projects that reduce emissions through alternative fuels such as biomass, rice husks, sawdust and used tires.

### **NEW BIRD SPECIES FOUND ON TOGIAN**

Scientists from the University of Indonesia and Michigan State University officially discovered a new bird species in the Togian islands near central Sulawesi. The "Togian white-eye", or *Zosterops somadikartai*, is a small, greenish-colored bird with white eye rings. Michigan State University staff said that the birds most likely fall under the International Union for Conservation of Nature's category of "endangered".

### **RELIGIOUS GROUPS MAKE AN IMPACT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS**

The Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (LDII) and East Java Indonesian Muslim Council (MUI) kicked off a joint environmental campaign in March. The councils' annual program on the environment includes an education campaign for inexpensive organic fertilizer, a campaign to limit paper use, and tree planting in 26 hectares of land in Jombang, East Java. Dozens of religious associations also planted hundreds of trees in Surabaya in March 2008 under a campaign to protect the environment.

### **MANGROVE PLANTING IN SURABAYA**

The Mayor of Surabaya launched a mangrove planting campaign along the banks of the Jagir River in Surabaya on March 16. Six hundred people participated planting over 10,400 mangrove seeds in roughly 5,000 square meters of riverbank. The Surabaya Agriculture, Fishery, Marine, and Forestry Department provided 10,000 mangrove seeds; the remaining seeds were donated by individuals. The NGO Environmental Forum is in charge of seeing that the mangroves reach maturity and take root.

### **SURABAYA ZOO HATCHES KOMODO DRAGONS**

The Surabaya Zoo successfully hatched fourteen komodo dragon eggs March 8-9, bringing the total number of the species at the zoo to 41. This is the second successful hatching of the endangered lizards at the zoo, outside of their natural habitats. The zoo had previously succeeded in hatching 13 eggs in the 1990s.

### **UNEP LAUNCHES "GREEN FINS INDONESIA"**

On March 29, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) formally launched Green Fins Indonesia. The purpose of the initiative is to protect and conserve coral reefs by encouraging sustainable and environmentally friendly diving and snorkeling business practices. Assistant Deputy Minister for Coastal and Marine Degradation Control Wahyu Indraningsih opened the launch ceremony, which included government agencies, the Indonesian Diving Sport Association, the Maritime Tourism Association, local governments, universities, NGOs and students.

### **GOI DEVELOPS "FOREST FOR FOOD" PROGRAM**

In a national workshop on March 27, Minister of Forestry M.S. Kaban announced the planned development of a "Forest for Food" program. The program, to be developed with the Ministry of Agriculture, will be designed to alleviate national food supply issues. Under the plan, the Ministry of Forestry would consider using 3 million hectares of state-owned concession lands for rice, cassava, corn, soybean and other food cultivation. The Ministry of Forestry will request Rp. 5 - 12 trillion (\$541.9 million - \$1.3 billion) for the project.

### **ASEAN-WEN LEADS TO WILDLIFE TRADE INTERDICTIONS IN INDONESIA**

On March 3, Indonesian law enforcement authorities intercepted an illegal shipment of 3,500 green turtle eggs in East Kalimantan, applying methods learned under USAID-funded ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) training. On March 10, 2008, other trained Indonesian officials stopped the transport of 23,000 dried seahorses at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport Customs en route to South Korea.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **BILL GATES TO VISIT INDONESIA**

The Minister of Communication and Information, Muhammad Nu, confirmed that Microsoft founder Bill Gates would visit Indonesia in May to participate in the Government Leader Forum in Jakarta. President Yudhoyono personally invited Gates to attend. President Director of PT Microsoft Indonesia Tony Chen said that the forum would "discuss the roles of technology in development, including education, health and economic sector".

### **CONSTRUCTION STARTED ON NEW UNDERSEA BROADBAND CABLES**

On March 11, PT NAP Info Lintas Nusa announced the start of construction on a new "Matrix Cable System". The underwater cable system, over 1,000 km in length, will provide additional high-bandwidth connectivity to the growing Indonesian market. "The completed system will not only bring affordable communication to residents, but will also boost our e-commerce business capabilities", explained NAP Info Lintas Nusa's Senior Vice President, Patrick Adhiatmadja. The system is scheduled to be complete in June 2008.

## JAKARTA TO NORMALIZE LOCAL RIVERS

On March 30, Jakarta Governor Fauzi Wibowo announced that the Jakarta provincial government will use Dutch technology to normalize 13 rivers in the area. The Jakarta Administration will borrow Rp. 1.2 trillion (\$150 million) from the World Bank to fund the project, which will run from 2008-2012. The project includes acceleration of East Canal Flood (BKT) development, drainage renovation, water pumps, dam rehabilitation, and river and reservoir digging.

## **HEALTH**

### MALNUTRITION IN SURABAYA

Members of Surabaya Parliament told Congen Surabaya that they were surprised to learn that the number of malnourished children in Surabaya as of March 2008 had reached 10,071. Malnutrition has spread throughout all 31 districts in Surabaya. According to Surabaya parliament sources, the figure is surprising since the Surabaya government allocates around \$ 980,000 to fight malnutrition.

Experts have told local media that, in addition to poverty itself, a key factor in malnutrition has been parents' apparent reluctance to bring their children to village level integrated health service centers in order to receive supplements and treatment if needed.

In light of these failures, the Surabaya Planning and Development Board plans to change the way city government tackles malnutrition. Citing an overburdened Health Department, oversight of the food program will be shifted from the Health Department to the People's Empowerment Body. City government will also involve NGOs in providing assistance to malnourished children.

### FAMILY PLANNING EFFORTS SLOW POPULATION GROWTH

The National Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) announced that the government had successfully slowed the country's rate of population growth through its family planning initiatives. BKKBN's Youth Director said that the population growth rate has lowered from 2.32 percent in the 1970s to 1.3 percent at present. Recently the government has pushed more initiatives to encourage male contraception.

### DENGUE CASES DECREASE IN DEPOK

The number of dengue cases year to date in Depok has gone down from the same timeframe last year, according to the city's Health Agency. Since the beginning of 2008, 368 people in Depok have contracted dengue hemorrhagic fever, with two fatalities. The number of patients is down from the January-March 2007 timeframe, which logged 1,289 cases. The Head of the city's Health Agency attributed the drop in numbers to the implementation of routine mosquito fogging in residential areas.

### LIMITED ACCESS TO GOOD SANITATION

On March 27, the UNICEF Country Representative for Indonesia reported that almost 69 millions Indonesians do not have access to basic sanitation facilities, and 55 million do not have access to safe drinking water. The situation is especially serious for more vulnerable populations, such as children and the elderly. The Government of Indonesia launched an "International Year of Sanitation" campaign in response to the issue. The program seeks to raise awareness of sanitation, clean water and environmental issues for the public, local governments and civil society.

### INDONESIA RANKED THIRD IN NEW TUBERCULOSIS CASES

On March 24, the Director General for Communicable Disease Control (CDC), Dr. Nyoman Kandun, stated that Indonesia had the third highest number of people with tuberculosis in the world, with 500,000 new cases each year or 300 new cases per day. Most of cases occurred in Java and Bali. He attributed the high number of cases to a lack of awareness among the public to schedule regular health checks and seek medical aid when they become sick. To commemorate World TB Day, the GOI allocated Rp. 266 billion (\$28.8 million) for a national "Combat TB Completely" campaign.

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